DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 305 490 CE 052 228

TITLE Literacy Begins at Home.
INSTITUTION Business Council for Effective Literacy, New York, NY.
PUB DATE Apr 89
NOTE 7p.
PUB TYPE Journal Articles (080) -- Reports - Research/Technical (143)
JOURNAL CIT BCEL Newsletter for the Business Community; n19 p1,4-7 Apr 1989

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Adult Basic Education; *Adult Literacy; Adult Programs; Early Childhood Education; Employment Potential; *Family Programs; Federal Legislation; High School Equivalency Programs; *Intergenerational Programs; Job Skills; *Literacy Education; *Parent Education; Program Effectiveness; Program Implementation
IDENTIFIERS Job Literacy

ABSTRACT

This article describes models of literacy education using the intergenerational approach. This approach attempts to teach both parents and children reading and writing, while also improving the parenting and job readiness skills of the parents. Several ongoing projects are described, such as the Kenan Trust Family Literacy Project in Kentucky and North Carolina, the Collaborations for Literacy in Boston, and the Take Up Reading Now program operated by Push Literacy Action Now (PLAN) in the District of Columbia. The article addresses program design issues, family literacy in the workplace, and the possibilities of passing legislation in support of family literacy programs. (KC)

**********
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
**********

ED305490

# LITERACY BEGINS AT HOME

ADULT LITERACY: PROGRAMS, PLANNING, ISSUES

A Newsletter for the Business Community

No. 19 April 1989

Business Council for Effective Literacy
1221 Avenue of the Americas
New York, NY 10020

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

P Gurno

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

CE052228

BCEL BUSINESS COUNCIL FOR EFFECTIVE LITERACY

ADULT LITERACY : PROGRAMS • PLANNING • ISSUES A Newsletter For The Business Community

NO. 19 APRIL 1989

# LITERACY BEGINS AT HOME

From "Reading and Learning Tips For Parents." Courtesy of PLAN, Inc., Washington, D.C.

The apple doesn't fall far from the tree, they say. That old bit of folk wisdom, dressed to go in the language of educators, cognitive scientists, and legislators, has become a force behind a growing movement in the field of adult literacy. It is driving new kinds of programs that approach illiteracy as a family affair and seek to break the chain that perpetuates it from generation to generation.

The significance of the movement is that it advances the traditional discourse about illiteracy. It shifts the focus from treating illiteracy as individual failure to the broader context of its root causes—and to strategies for preventing it where it begins: in the social and cultural environment of the home.

## Like Parent, Like Child

Low-literate families tend to reproduce themselves. Children who grow up in homes where parents do not read, or read only marginally, lack the role model provided by a literate parent. They lack early exposure to reading by not having stories read to them by a parent. They do not see books or print materials around the house. There is little use for these things in homes where the adults cannot read, or where they may be too poor to buy them even if they can read. Some children do not even have homes; they make up a growing share of the homeless population in America.

Non-reading parents cannot help their children with homework. When asked for help, they may brush the children aside because they are embarrassed or insecure about their own literacy skills. The children may interpret this to mean that school is thought to be unimportant. (For most parents this is far from the case; they are ashamed of their own lack of schooling and do not want their children to suffer their own educational limitations.) These parents are not the ones who show up at PTA meetings or go to see the teacher when a child's report card is poor. They may be unable to read the report card or interpret what it means. And they may be too intimidated or disconnected from the school to go there in any case, it being the institution where they themselves failed or experienced humiliation.

There are millions of such adults, millions of such homes, and millions of children growing up in them. And their numbers are growing—as are the social and economic conditions that spawn them.

Family poverty is on the rise. Nearly one-third of all young families are poor, more than double the number of two decades ago. One-fourth of all families are now headed by a single parent, mostly women (40 percent of whom have an 8th grade education or less). Some 15 million children, nearly 24 percent of those under 18, live in these households (1986). More than one million teenagers become pregnant each year; for every hundred children born today, thirteen are born to teenage girls. These adolescent mothers are less likely to complete high school than mothers who have children at a later age. To boot, the research from which such statistics come points to the educational level of the mother as the greatest predictor of a child's future academic success.

Cognitive science research has much to tell us about the way human learning develops. It is primarily a cultural and social phenomenon, says researcher Tom Sticht of Applied Behavioral and Cognitive Sciences—as opposed, that is, to the notion that there are biological or genetic factors that set limits on cognitive potential. Sticht is co-author (with Barbara McDonald) of a soon-to-be published report on the intergenerational transfer of cognitive ability. The report is based on a three-day conference which assembled national figures from the practice, research, and policy-making literacy communities; its purpose, to review past literacy interventions, and to consider the implications of present knowledge in the cognitive sciences for new approaches to the illiteracy problem.

The report states that *"the major source of cognitive ability is the social environment into which the child is born and reared. It is this environment that provides the basic tools of thought, language, concepts, and the means and motivation for 'intellectual' activities."* Or, put another way, "the individual's potential is no better than the networks of intelligences into which she or he can connect." (cont'd. on p. 4)

# LITERACY BEGINS AT HOME

(cont'd. from p. 1)

## The Intergenerational Approach

Ordinarily, remedial programs work with separate groups. Head Start and Chapter I compensatory programs focus on children. The Job Corps focuses on Youth. The Adult Basic Education Act focuses on adults. (Chapter I is the federally-financed program for disadvantaged children who are below grade in basic skills.) By and large, these efforts have not been effective enough, as measured by educational gain. The dropout rate in adult programs is very high, and the children's programs have yielded only short-term cognitive gains that diminish without sustained follow-up.

Intergenerational programs may well be a partial answer. They are oriented toward preventing the problem, not just treating it after the fact. By approaching the matter holistically, as a condition of multiple interlocking factors, they do not focus exclusively on adults or exclusively on children. They regard the family, or adults and children together, as a combined learning unit.

## A Range Of Models

Because the intergenerational literacy movement is in its infancy, definitions are still evolving, as are a range of different program models for different situations. Indeed, intergenerational programs already seem to abound. They are coming in a rapid profusion, if not confusion, of shapes and styles. Some, according to the experts, are based on simplistic assumptions about what will produce lasting results, others are unclear or unrealistic about their goals, and even the exemplary efforts, such as those discussed below, have not yet accumulated enough experience to be definitive about their impact. But one thing is clear at this stage. Curricula and strategies for the transfer of literacy from the parent to the child must be consciously designed into family literacy programs. As Ruth Nickse, a pioneer in family literacy, puts it: "Intergenerational programs [that work] involve more than just sitting a kid on your lap and reading to him. It's not that simple."

A good program, according to those in the forefront, should have all of the following characteristics:

- literacy and parenting education for adults;
- literacy and pre-literacy activities for children;
- varying degrees of systematic parent and child interaction, with emphasis on parents as teachers;
- interdisciplinary teamwork on the part of ABE and early childhood teachers; and
- liaison with community agencies which bring their resources to bear on various problems faced by the families.

The range of existing programs, according to Nickse, could be said to comprise a continuum of formal direct interventions and informal indirect approaches. At one end is the tightly structured program where parents and pre-school children are taught by adult literacy teachers and early childhood teachers, usually in a formal setting, with a built-in design for parent-child interactions. The highly-acclaimed Kenan Family Literacy Project, described below, is an example. Because such programs require a firm, sustained commitment of parent time, they are targeted chiefly on those who are unemployed and who have children of pre-school age. They also require an on-site early childhood specialist and an adult literacy specialist.

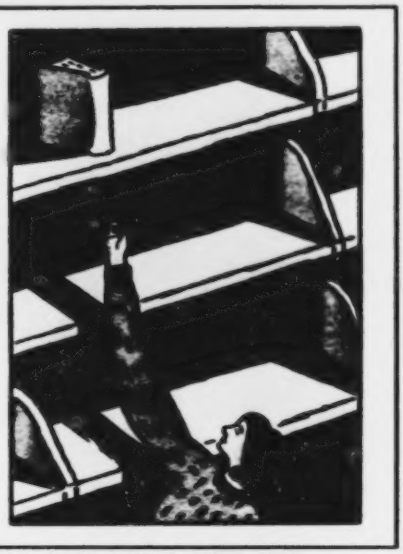

Illustration Use Donated By Artist Michael Klein

Moving along the continuum are the less formal programs where adults and children are not necessarily taught together. These are appropriate for working parents and those whose children are already in school. The parent or adult is the focal point, with the curriculum and instruction designed to improve his or her reading ability in order to serve as reading models for the children.

Next are programs of informal indirect intervention. These cover a spectrum of activities from consciousness-raising about literacy, to advocacy, to "literacy events." Typical literacy events, often planned as weekend activities for working as well as unemployed parents and their children, might include story telling, puppet shows, book fairs, the use of computers, and the like. The purpose of these pleasure-directed family activities is to build positive values and attitudes about literacy where no such tradition exists.

Many programs are combinations and permutations of these three basic types. And some include grandparents, aunts, uncles, or other primary caretakers. Some also include older and younger children who are not necessarily family members at all.

## The Kenan Trust Family Literacy Project

Three days a week at 8:30 in the morning, groups of undereducated, generally poor parents go to school with their three- and four-year old children. They stay until 2:30 in the afternoon. They are transported by bus and served breakfast and lunch at no cost. They are all part of the Kenan Trust Family Literacy Project, an 18-month project funded by the William R. Kenan Jr. Charitable Trust in North Carolina, which is now installed at seven sites in Kentucky and North Carolina. [The Family Literacy Program is patterned after the award-winning Parent and Child Education Program (PACE) initiated in Kentucky four years ago and now operating at 18 sites in that state with the hope of expanding to as many as 90.]

Recruiting people into the Kenan Family Literacy Program has not been easy. The program is intense. It requires long-term commitment, and it asks that parents come to a place where they have failed in the past. In many instances, parents are recruited personally, identified through welfare or Head Start programs and visited in their homes by Kenan teacher teams who come to motivate them. Once signed up they tend to stay, especially as the children grow excited about their parents' participation.

During the course of the day the children are provided with cognitively-oriented pre-school activities based on learning through play, while their mothers or fathers sharpen their skills in reading, math, and language. The adult basic skills curriculum also includes parenting education, pre-employment skills, and vocational education.

The staff is comprised of two early childhood teachers and an adult education teacher who have distinct roles but meet regularly and have been trained to function as a team. The adult education teacher teaches the basic skills and individually-tailored vocational components. The early childhood teacher teaches the pre-school and parenting components. Equally important, parents are taught that they are the first and foremost educators of their children. Group process techniques are taught so that the teachers can effectively lead parent group meetings where all kinds of life needs are discussed.

A component that has evolved is school volunteer work by parents for about an hour each day. They work as custodial, office, or kindergarten aides. Through their volunteer work they get to know the principal on a friendly basis. And many of the parents, who have never before held a job, get work experience they can use on a job application as well as a job reference from the school principal. Thus, the parent-school interactions are highly significant for all concerned.

A typical day in the program looks like this:

8:15-10:45 Parents in basic skills and/or employment preparation instruction. Children in developmental pre-school program until 11:00.

10:45-11:00 Break for parents.

11:00-11:45 Parents join children for learning activities, and practice teaching in an atmosphere where learning is fun. An early childhood specialist is on hand to help.

11:45-12:15 Parents/children lunch together.

12:15-1:00 Parents study or work as school volunteers and children rejoin pre-school program activities.

1:00-2:30 Parents receive training in parenting skills while children nap.

Though similar programs could be adapted to public libraries and community settings, the Kenan model is deliberately located in elementary schools. That is because the schoolhouse itself is so often a barrier to parents' participation in their children's education. The idea is to make it comfortable, familiar terrain. The setting also facilitates contact with school personnel, making them more sensitive to the circumstances of the families.

Asked about the results so far, director Sharon Darling demurs. "If pressed, I could tell you that 80 percent of the adults in an evaluation of PACE increased two grade levels after 75 hours of instruc-

tion, or met their individual goals, and that the children increased their development skills by 28 percent. But grade level gains on the basis of these programs don't mean anything. The goals of the program don't translate into those terms. They are essentially concerned with instilling positive values and attitudes about education that will ultimately affect the attitudes and performance of children."

In addition to operating its family literacy programs, the Kenan project is engaged in many other activities. Its mission includes research and evaluation to help build a family literacy data base, providing information and technical assistance to groups across the country, and advocacy for national and state literacy efforts. It presently serves as a clearinghouse for information on family literacy programs and has also produced a planning guide and video about its own program.

(For more information contact Sharon Darling, Executive Director, Kenan Trust Family Literacy Project, Starks Building, Fourth Avenue, Louisville, KY 40202, (502) 584-1133.)

## Collaborations For Literacy

A less formal program model is the groundbreaking Collaborations for Literacy (CFL), started at Boston University in 1984. CFL was one of the first programs in the country founded on the recognition that the educationally-disadvantaged parent and child are a learning unit and might benefit from shared learning activities. Ruth Nickse, its architect and director, has an unusual background of professional training and experience both as an early childhood teacher and an adult educator. She was uniquely situated to see promise in combining the two.

CFL's objective is to move parents, grandparents, or other surrogates to improve their own reading through the process of reading to their children. The adults are the primary instructional target, but a "ripple" effect to the child is consciously designed. The immediate partners in the "collaboration" are adults whose reading skills are non-existent or very low (zero to 4th grade), children aged 4-11, and reading tutors. The tutors are college students trained in one-to-one teaching techniques by Literacy Volunteers of Massachusetts, and paid for their work from federal College Work-Study funds.

The individual tutoring is essential to the program for numerous reasons. Adults with very low skills are not comfortable in groups where they may be measured against each other, and for many, the individual attention is their first personalized, warm learning experience. But most important is the personal relationship between the adult learner and the tutor because how the adult is taught becomes the model for how the parent will teach the child.

"The way parents read to their kids can inhibit or enhance the way a child takes to reading," says Nickse. "It has to be realized that in many of these families there is not only no habit of reading, there's not even a habit of speaking to the kids. It's a long jump from that to understanding that verbal communication is important, and how to do it. What's more, children and parents have to have a good relationship to do it."

The accent, therefore, is not only on the mechanics of academic skills but on the relationships and processes involved in successful teaching and learning. Parents are exposed to positive experiences from which they can internalize an image of themselves as successful learners, enjoy it, and convey it to their children.

There are three components in the CFL curriculum:

- Selected children's books, especially those in the Reading Rainbow television series (used in conjunction with video-taped programs at the various learning sites). Because the goal is to encourage adults to improve their own reading by reading to children, the use of children's books, which would otherwise be demeaning, is justified. The same applies to oral reading, because the point is to enable parents to take the books home and read aloud with their children.
- Children's books which focus on building an awareness of occupations and careers.
- Functional materials used in response to the life needs of individual parents (cookbooks, driver's manuals, insurance claim forms).

Scheduling, which demands a minimum of three hours per week, is at the convenience of student and tutor. Over the years, CFL has operated at various sites including public libraries and community centers. It grew from a part-time community-based program to a full-time family learning center in its own storefront facility. The storefront, specially designed for its purpose, was arranged with a children's corner, a full complement of ABE/ESL instruction for parents, and areas for regular Saturday family literacy-enhancing events.

Numerous public and private agencies have been partners in the collaboration: Boston University and Literacy Volunteers of Massachusetts, for example, and Chapter I Boston Public Schools (which identified at-risk children and served as a source of parent recruitment), the Boston Public Library, the Adult Basic Education program (for which CFL served as a feeder), the Institute for Responsive Education, and the Area Planning Action Council (a community-based agency). Funding has come from numerous public and private sources: the Massachusetts State Department of Education, Boston University, B. Dalton Bookseller, the Hymes Trust Foundation, and others.

Ironically, the Family Learning Center was closed last August for lack of funds, and along with it Collaborations for Literacy.

Michael Klein

Moreover, it is regrettable that even while in operation the program struggled with funding problems. According to Ms. Nickse, "private and public monies would be available one year but not the next. Welfare would pay for the education of the adults but not support the activities for children, and likewise with ABE. So money for the children had to be 'pirated.' Performance objectives have to be based on participation of the family unit, and it was a big problem that many funders would never let us count the kids."

(Two excellent guides were produced by the project for setting up similar intergenerational reading programs: the *Collaborations for Literacy Tutor's Handbook*, and the *Administrator's Handbook*, both available through the ERIC system and/or the Institute for Responsive Education, Boston University, 605 Commonwealth Avenue, Boston, MA 02215. Evaluative data and further information about the CFL program is available from Dr. Ruth Nickse, (617) 353-3326.)

## Take Up Reading Now

Further along in the continuum of models is Take Up Reading Now (TURN). Now in its fourth year, TURN is a community-oriented literacy training and advocacy program operated by Push Literacy Action Now (PLAN) in the District of Columbia.

For the past 16 years PLAN has worked with adults, teaching them basic skills and providing a spectrum of literacy-related support services. Now it focuses on their offspring as well, including those not yet born. The stretch of literacy services from fully grown men and women to the unborn may seem very distant, but for PLAN it was a natural. (Among the places it takes its programs are prenatal clinics where the mothers-to-be constitute a captive audience.) Its philosophy is to address the total literacy needs of its clients—to see the problem whole, from the origins to the institutional and other barriers to literacy development.

On average, 25 percent of adults in PLAN literacy classes are parents of children in the first to fourth grades. More than half the children are at least two grades behind in reading. About half the parents themselves read below the fourth-grade level. One-fifth of the phone calls PLAN receives are from a parent whose child has a reading problem.

"It became obvious," says Mike Fox, PLAN's director, "that we could not serve the needs of adults without serving their needs as parents. Unless we did, we would be guaranteeing ourselves a supply of students for several generations to come."

PLAN's approach is pragmatic. It believes the need is now; that low-literate parents must, of course, learn how to read for better social and job functioning, but that they aren't going to soon enough to meet their immediate needs as parent-educators. Even where the parent is committed to learning to read, for most adults it takes years. Added to that are time constraints if parents are employed or taking care of children or if daycare isn't available or affordable. In short, by the time they learn to read well enough to get their children off to an early start, it might well be too late to make a difference.

To tackle this problem head-on, PLAN devised TURN, a model with three broad program strands: awareness-building, advocacy for children's educational rights, and developing access to books and

(cont'd. on p. 6)



5

# LITERACY BEGINS AT HOME

(cont'd. from p. 5)

other learning resources. A range of parent-child activities, from birth through the school years, is offered—for example, how to work with a child who has not even begun to walk or talk, how to make homemade books and toys, and how to encourage curiosity, play learning games, and create learning opportunities before the children start school. TURN teaches the nuts and bolts of coaching first lessons, where the library and bookstore are and how to use them. For those with children in school, it teaches how, at a minimum, to read school notices and report cards, how to talk to teachers, how daycare, Head Start, and pre-schools operate, how to work the system to enroll children in these programs, and how to make sure the public education system is providing the education their youngsters need and have a right to.

TURN does not recruit parents as such. It sends its teams out to where the parents are: prenatal and pediatric clinics, unemployment offices, housing projects, church family centers, and the like. Neither does it conduct most of its training workshops at the PLAN Center; these too take place where the parents are. Moreover, most workshops are not taught by professionals but by parents themselves, and by VISTA volunteers.

(To help those wishing to develop similar programs, PLAN has produced an exemplary kit, *Laying the Foundations*. It contains guidelines for creating a parent-child curriculum and resource materials for trainers and tutors. The kit and more information about TURN are available from PLAN, Inc., 1332 G Street, SE, Washington, DC 20003, (202) 547-8903.)

## Program Design Issues

The pioneeering work done by the three programs discussed above was based on careful planning, good program design, and great sensitivity to the mixed needs of parent and child. And there are numerous other exemplary efforts that could have been described here as well but for lack of space. Even among the model efforts, however, no one knows just how much the cognitive skills of both parents and their children will actually increase. "There are still insufficient data to permit firm conclusions," notes Tom Sticht. But he goes on to stress that "preliminary findings do suggest reason for cautious optimism." The main concern is that out of eagerness to act, too many hastily-conceived programs have been put in place, or will be.

In family literacy programs, the best that we know confirms that an *interdisciplinary approach is essential*. Merely tacking early childhood education as an add-on to adult programs and vice-versa will not work. All the elements are integral. Adult literacy teachers don't know the dynamics of early childhood development, early childhood teachers don't know about adult education, and both need the involvement of family support agencies. Without this triad, the approach will remain fragmented. Moreover, because no single discipline has sufficient knowledge to go it alone, administration of these programs requires a high degree of skill.

Kenan Family Literacy Class

Further, while examining other models is always helpful in the design of any new program, *the automatic adoption of other models is to be avoided*. Communities must go through a process that leads them to strategies appropriate to their own situation.

Finally, the collection of good program data, evaluations, and follow-up are needed if programs are to assess their cognitive impact on parents and children. To provide a basis for this kind of assessment, *there is a great need for more theoretical and applied research*—on such questions as how cognition develops as a social activity across generations and in particular population groups, and the role of particular environments and social networks. This chicken-and-egg problem is a matter of deep concern to those in the forefront.

## Family Literacy In The Workplace

An issue not yet addressed here is the role of family literacy programs in places of employment. Item: Nearly half of all mothers with children under age six now work outside the home. Item: By the year 2000 it is expected that 80 percent of women in the 25-54 age category will be employed. Because mothers are their children's first teachers, and more and more mothers are going to be in the workforce, childcare worksite programs that incorporate parent-child learning activities seem essential. At this writing we have been unable to uncover any such models. "Actual parent-child programs at the workplace introduce a level of complexity we haven't gotten to yet," observes Robert Zager of the Work In America Institute.

## The Legislative Challenge

The crisis of an undereducated citizenry lacking in the skills to meet the future economic needs of the nation has been a potent factor in the development of intergenerational literacy as an issue. Two important new pieces of legislation will give even greater force to the movement. They are Even Start, and the Family Support Act of 1988 which reforms the nation's welfare system.

*Even Start* is a family-centered education program enacted in the fall of 1988. It is a four-year demonstration effort separate from existing Head Start programs for children and adult ABE programs, though its regulations call for coordination with both as well as with JTPA programs. Though Even Start may look like Head Start in some ways, there are essential differences. For example, Head Start, chiefly for children aged three and four, is administered by the Department of Health and Human Services through local human service agencies, and may or may not include some kind of parent involvement. Even Start, in contrast, focuses on families with children aged one to seven. It is administered by the Department of Education through local school districts, and literacy training for parents is a specific requirement.

The law is framed to encourage partnerships among providers and allows for program flexibility in order to bring a variety of existing services together. Regulations call for parental involvement in the planning and design of programs, childcare and transportation services, scheduling convenient to parents and children, and the inclusion of home-based programs. There is also provision for staff training for work with parent-child learning units, which may include home visits, teaching custodial childcare workers about the developmental growth of children, and the like.

Funding for the first year of Even Start (FY89) is $14.8 million (with three percent set aside for migrant families), though $50 million was authorized. Modest as this allotment is, it is nevertheless a beginning. Even Start is an important initiative in that it is a policy statement signalling congressional concern about the intergenerational transmission of illiteracy. It is hoped that the appropriation will be increased to its authorized level, and indeed *JUMP START*, the recent paper by the Southport Institute, called for restoration of full funding.

Every state will receive some funds. The federal share will start at 90 percent in 1989 and decrease to 60 percent by the fourth year. At the present appropriation level, grants will go directly from the U.S. Department of Education to local school districts, but if full funding were restored state departments of education would receive the funds.

A giant step toward raising the educational level of the poorest Americans could come through the *Family Security Act of 1988*. The Act contains the most far-reaching overhaul of the welfare system's chief component—Aid to Families with Dependent Children—since the Great Depression of 1935.

There are 3.8 million families on welfare (1987). Three-fifths of the adults in these families haven't completed high school and the average reading level of welfare mothers aged 17 to 21 is below 6th grade.

"The law," says Senator Patrick Moynihan, its chief architect, "turns the present family welfare system on its head." A major way it does this is through its

education provisions. It is directed to young parents, mainly those under age 22, and will indirectly benefit their children. It pledges to make education, training, or work available to destitute parents. With it are guarantees of childcare, transportation and other miscellaneous items, and childcare and Medicaid support as needed during a parent's first year of transition to work will also be provided. In return, able-bodied parents must, with some exceptions, take part in the programs or be cut off from receiving welfare benefits.

The law calls for the states to establish and operate within three years their own education, training, and employment experience programs (JOBS: Job Opportunities and Basic Skills). The states must also involve the private sector in designing the programs, coordinate them with other work-related programs, and at their option enter into contracts with public or private agencies to carry out the JOBS activities. JOBS offerings are to cover a range of services including remedial basic skills, high-school equivalency work, ESL instruction, on-the-job skills training, and community work experience.

To implement the new law, a net increase of $3.3 billion in federal funding will flow to the states over a 5-year phase-in period, with the federal government covering up to 90 percent of the JOBS program costs and 60 to 80 percent of the costs for related services.

Promising as the new law is for lifting the nation's underclass from entrenched educational disadvantage, the experience of some states where education and welfare have been linked in the past (such as Massachusetts, California, Minnesota, Ohio, Florida, and New Jersey) suggest that there may be some problems ahead. For example, many state officials are concerned that the need for basic literacy and math skills among the disadvantaged is understated, especially in states with large non-English speaking populations. Experience also indicates that caseloads will be far greater than expected and that the cost of education services will far exceed present estimates, placing an impossible burden on state-level agencies. Childcare and daycare services are costly, and personnel for them are mostly untrained. Yet if the states are unable to provide childcare services, parents are automatically exempt from participating in the programs. States, of course, will be required to put up a substantial amount of their own money in any case, and how much they will want to invest, or be able to, especially where economies are sagging, is open to question.

Still further concerns are the following: If job searches are given higher priority than education, the participants may wind up in low-paying jobs and never get the education they really need. If troubled students are simply returned to the classrooms where they experienced failure, without the causes being addressed, educators and students alike will be frustrated in their efforts. Moreover, an overriding concern is whether the three vast bureaucracies—the Departments of Health and Human Services, Education, and Labor—will work closely enough together to make the law work. Alicia Smith of the National Governor's Task Force says, "In most states those people don't talk to each other, don't understand each other's programs, and tend to guard their turf. Our job at the governors' level is to ensure that this comes to an end."

Finally it should be noted that one of *JUMP START*'s key recommendations is that the Even Start intergenerational approach be explicitly worked into the new welfare law—because of the promise of family literacy approaches and the substantial sums of money to be provided under the Act.

Meanwhile, activities in family literacy continue apace:

The Virginia State Library and Archives will convene a statewide conference in May of librarians, educators, social service agencies, policymakers, and volunteer agencies to heighten awareness and provide information about programs, resources, and support groups available for communities that want to start family literacy programs.

The Chicago Public Library, in cooperation with the Chicago Board of Education, the Chicago Housing Authority, and a group of computer hardware and software manufacturers recently initiated the Family Literacy Initiative: a computer-based program to teach print and computer literacy using an intergenerational approach. Grandparents, parents, and children will take part in classes given in housing projects.

The Work In America Institute will hold a meeting in New York City in May to bring together companies and unions that may be interested in piloting workplace programs designed to help parents help their children do better in school. The idea is to reach parents at the workplace, where they are, and equip them with information and materials they can use with their children at home. ■